

MENTAL HEALTH UPDATE

September 11, 2007

THIS WEEK'S BANNER OF HOPE ---

"The simple negatives in life will control you but the simple positives can set you free"

ADULT MENTAL HEALTH

Transformation Advisory Council

An Advisory Council on Mental Health Services Transformation will bring family members, consumers, and other key contributors together with leadership from DMH and other agencies to provide input on mental health program options and policies. Created by the 2007 legislature, the "Council" will help DMH chart the next phase of Vermont's movement toward the future of mental health care.

Commissioner Michael Hartman has invited participants to the first meeting on Monday, September 24, 1:00 – 3:00, in the Skylight room of the Waterbury State Complex. The Commissioner describes the Council as a forum for discussion of program components, resources, and practices needed to transform the current system of care into a new system that integrates co-occurring and trauma-informed care predicated on client preferences, inclusion of family members and other support persons, and recovery- and outcome-oriented practices where they are applicable.

Commissioner Hartman also identified a number of issues requiring resolution for DMH to improve care for Vermonters in an environment of decreasing personnel resources and possible new federal restrictions on financially assisting states in providing such services:

- VSH successor programs
- Involuntary commitment and medications
- Increased presentation of mental illness and substance abuse needs in general hospital emergency departments
- Decreased availability of psychiatric services in hospitals and community settings
- Mental health services for persons who are criminally charged but not adjudicated due to mental illness
- Mental health services for persons incarcerated in the DOC system but needing psychiatric hospital care

A significant factor to the success of the Transformation Council is the participation of key contributors who have ongoing involvement with person-centered care either as a provider, consumer, or family member. The Commissioner noted a second factor is the need for the Council to have an open atmosphere while also providing adequate security for all participants to express their ideas and concerns in a respectful environment.

Beginning in October, the Council will meet the 4th Monday of the month, 2:00-4:15, in Central/Northern Vermont or other locations to allow for participation of persons from around the state. DMH will publicly notice meetings through the State Library system. Meetings will have agendas (with public input) and minutes.

Two Designated Agencies Seek Approval to Construct New Buildings

Two agencies have indicated their intent to seek approval for the construction of new buildings in their communities and, in each case, will need a Certificate of Approval (COA) to do so. Proposed capital expenditure projects by Vermont Designated Agencies are excluded from Certificate of Need review and approval under 18 V.S.A. § 9435(b). Rather, they must be approved by the Commissioners of the Department of Mental Health (DMH) and of the Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living (DAIL) following review. The review entails an analysis of the financial feasibility of each project, consideration of the potential impact on access to and quality of programs and a process for public input.

Lamoille County Mental Health Services (LCMHS) has submitted a Letter of Intent to construct a new building in Morrisville. The Agency plans to consolidate all of its Mental Health and Development Services as well as its administrative offices into a 15,000 square foot building for an estimated cost of 3 million dollars.

Counseling Service of Addison County (CSAC) has submitted a Letter of Intent as well as a COA application for two projects involving a total capital expenditure of \$3,560,702. Because of the financial interdependence of the two projects, DMH asked the agency to combine the two projects in one COA application. The application has been filed and articulates CSAC's interest in approval to do the following:

- Construct a new 19,500 sq. ft. building to house Developmental Services programs, Community Associates and administrative offices.
- Construct an accessible two-story 2,500 sq. ft. addition to CSAC's 89 Main Street building in downtown Middlebury.

DMH and DAIL have until 9/24/07 to review the CSAC application and determine if it is complete for further formal review. Once the application is complete, it will be posted for public review and a public comment process will be set.

Upcoming Vermont Recovery Celebration

Vermont Psychiatric Survivors and the Department of Mental Health will co-host a Vermont Recovery Celebration featuring Mary Ellen Copeland on September 18th, 2007, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The celebration will be held in Room 2B of the Zampieri State Office Building at 108 Cherry Street in Burlington. The event will also feature words from recovery educator graduates from across the state, and Beth Tanzman, DMH deputy commissioner.

For registration and more information, contact: Vermont Psychiatric Survivors
Toll free 1-800-564-2106 or vpsinc@sover.net.

To view the celebration brochure visit: [Vermont Recovery Day](#)

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH

Success Beyond Six Legislative Study Group Holds First Meeting

The Success Beyond Six legislative study group held the first of its 4 scheduled meetings on August 30. The group is co-chaired by Charlie Biss from MH and Deborah Quackenbush from the Department of Education. Participants of the 30 member group reviewed their charge from the legislature, which is to recommend ways to help the popular Success Beyond Six funding initiative to function more effectively and efficiently as a program in today's environment. Twenty years ago, the initiative was developed as a collaborative funding strategy that enabled mental health and education to provide mental health services to Vermont children in school settings using education general fund dollars and federal Medicaid funds. Data showed that Special Education students with serious emotional disturbances, the largest of the fourteen special education disability groups, were significantly more likely not to graduate from high school than students with other disabilities.

The Success Beyond Six initiative has grown to a \$30 million per year funding stream, but Vermont now has a cap on overall Medicaid funding through its first-in-the-nation Global Commitment to Health Medicaid Waiver. The group has been asked to ensure that the initiative utilizes best practices, yields positive outcomes, and is managed to a predictable rate of growth. The first meeting focused on reviewing practice models that are current in Vermont and additional best practices, in school mental health, from around the country. Specific models reviewed included: Positive Behavioral Intervention Strategies, UCLA's Comprehensive System of Learning Supports, Coordinated School Health, Autism Programs, Vermont's Components of a School Health System, Vermont's Student Assistance Program and HowardCenter's Students First Program.

The second meeting will be held on September 20, 9:00 - 12:00, at 1138 Pine Street, Burlington; members of the public are welcome to attend. The study group will examine the parameters of the Global Commitment Medicaid Waiver and discuss a possible menu of best practice models to address the needs of Vermont students within existing resources.

Federal Grant to Vermont Federation of Families

The Vermont Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health has been notified that it was a successful competitor for a three-year Family Network Grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). The Vermont Federation of Families is an organization run by and for families whose children have mental-health issues. It provides information and referrals for services and works to spread knowledge about mental health, reduce stigma, and promote better services at the individual and system levels. The Vermont Federation also provides a valuable service to the world of public children's mental health by referring interested and qualified family members to Designated Agencies and to the Department of Mental Health as potential members of Local and State Program Standing Committees. The Family Network Grant is designed to help private nonprofit organizations such as the Federation to build their infrastructure.

FUTURES PROJECT

Proposals for New Crisis Beds – Round II

The Department of Mental Health began its review this week of crisis stabilization / hospital diversion program applications designed to augment community-based crisis services while reducing the need for hospital admissions. Four Designated Agencies submitted proposals for consideration: Rutland Mental Health Services, Howard Center, Lamoille County Mental Health, and the Clara Martin Center. Once applications are deemed complete, they will be posted on the DMH website. The public is encouraged to comment from September 21 to October 12, in writing or email, addressed to Dawn Philibert at dphilib@vdh.state.vt.us

The agencies will present their proposals to a review panel on October 2, 1:00 – 4:00, in the Skylight room at the Waterbury State Complex. Serving on the review panel are:

- Michelle Lavallee, Acute Care Program Chief, DMH
- Bill Snyder, Financial Administrator, VDH Business Office
- Marty Roberts, Adult State Program Standing Committee
- Larry Lewack, Executive Director, NAMI-VT
- Jackie Leman, former Futures Advisory Committee member

A public hearing will follow at 4:00 p.m. Commissioner Michael Hartman will consider recommendations of the review panel, comments received during the comment period, and at the public hearing. The Commissioner will approve selected proposals and grant Certificates of Approval for implementation of up to six new crisis beds by October 26th.

Expanding Opportunities for Peer Support

The VSH Futures Peer Support Development Workgroup met on August 23rd to continue its work on developing recommendations regarding how peer-run alternatives could be used to reduce the need to serve individuals at the Vermont State Hospital. The workgroup is currently examining different state models for a peer support certification program in which people with the lived experience of mental illness complete a formal training program and become certified by the state as peer specialists. In some states peer specialists are able to bill Medicaid for providing peer support. The workgroup is also discussing models for peer crisis programs that could be made available as an alternative to hospitalization. Several of the workgroup members have formed a subcommittee to research crisis respite programs that are able to work with individuals who do not find medications helpful.

In related news, two workgroup members who hail from Northwest Counseling and Support Services are working to make peer supporters available to individuals transitioning out of the new crisis bed program being developed in St. Albans.

VERMONT INTEGRATED SERVICES INITIATIVE (VISI)

General Update

The VISI Program continues to do fidelity visits with 29 agencies and hopes to have all agency action plans by October 31st. The action plans outline incremental change to improve services for people with co-occurring mental health and substance use conditions. The action plans are based on our fidelity visits, and they are done in conjunction with VISI technical assistance.

The Co-Occurring Recovery Camping Trip on Saturday, September 1st, thru Monday, September 3rd, at Lake Elmore State Park was a great success. Twenty-five people attended and shared in a weekend of great weather, fun and food. Team-building activities were conducted by Barbara PaFume, ADAP Prevention Consultant. Everyone looks forward to repeating this event next year.

VISI Peer Program

A Peer Conference will be held at the Cortina Inn in Killington on September 28th from 10 am to 4 pm. Gary Stromberg, co-founder of Gibson and Stromberg a large and influential music public relations firm of the 1970s and producer of the hit movie *Car Wash*, will speak about his experiences with alcohol and drugs and a co-occurring eating disorder as well as his book *The Harder They Fall: Celebrities Tell Their Real-Life Stories of Addiction and Recovery*. Gary will also lead a conference workshop on "Telling Your Own Story." Additional conference workshops will focus on co-occurring education and successful recovery models for people with co-occurring conditions.

Dartmouth Psychiatric Research Center's Dr. Mark McGovern to Visit

Please join the Vermont Integrated Services Initiative Team and Dr. Mark McGovern for coffee and bagels on Thursday, September 13th from 10:30 to noon in the Community Colleges of Vermont (CCV) classroom lower level #7 at 110 Cherry Street in Burlington. Dr. McGovern, of the Dartmouth Psychiatric Research Center, has been working with the VISI team to conduct fidelity visits using the Dual Diagnosis Capability in Addiction Treatment (DDCAT) fidelity scale. You are invited to learn about the DDCAT tool, to review aggregate, non-identifying data that we have received to date, and to discuss the major issues facing systems of care and programs working with people who have co-occurring mental health and substance use conditions.

Upcoming VISI Meetings

Mark your calendars for the next **VISI Steering Committee** on Friday, November 9th, from 9:00 am until Noon at the Best Western Hotel in Waterbury. The steering committee will continue its planning process for advancing understanding of co-occurring issues and the principles of integrated care across systems. The location of the meeting will be announced within the next two weeks.

The Workforce Development Co-occurring Capacity Subcommittee is analyzing the need for a co-occurring credential in the State of Vermont. This subcommittee meets on the first Tuesday of each month at 9am in the Shepard Conference Room in ADAP, Suite 202.

The next meeting for the **Clinical Practices Committee** is on Thursday, September 20th, from 12:30 to 3:00 pm in the Claudia Stone Conference Room in Waterbury. This committee is working on Best Practices in integrated screening, intake, treatment protocols and discharge planning issues.

VISI Training

Modules 3 and 4 of the VISI Co-occurring 101 training for PATH providers and Recovery Center support staff will be on Friday, September 21st, from 9 am to 3:00 pm at the Vermont Technical Training Site in Randolph. Please note that the VISI team is combining modules 3 and 4 and there will not be a training on October 24th.

On October 12 VISI will be sponsoring the keynote speaker and several workshops at the Valley Vista Conference on co-occurring disorders at Lake Morey. The keynote speaker is Terence Gorski, an internationally recognized expert on substance abuse, mental health, violence and crime.

To connect with these meetings or to join the committees please contact Paul Dragon at 652-2020.

VISI Resources

Please check out the VISI website at <http://healthvermont.gov/mh/visi/index.aspx>

The co-occurring brochures for consumers are in. They are a great way to get basic information across to people in need of services. The brochures are available free from the VISI Team.

VERMONT STATE HOSPITAL

Implementation of Treatment Mall at VSH

With the goal of increasing and improving the active treatment provided to VSH patients, the Hospital is in the early stages of developing and implementing a Treatment Mall. A Treatment Mall is an integrated system of multidisciplinary, recovery-based treatment programs provided in a setting geographically removed from inpatient units. The goal is to provide choices that empower persons with mental disorders to address their needs, focus on personal strengths and resiliency, and enrich their lives. The literature shows that other facilities that have implemented Treatment Malls have increased the number and variety of active treatment programs in which individuals participate.

VSH's objectives with the development and implementation of a Treatment Mall include increasing the amount and variety of active treatment available and prescribed to individuals, providing treatment programs that address each person's needs, increasing hospitalized persons' choices and involvement in treatment decisions, providing normalizing environment that increases community living skills and enabling the Hospital to make optimal use of the clinical staff.

A multidisciplinary planning committee has been meeting since July 30, 2007. This task force has been working to identify changes necessary to implement a mall-based model

of treatment at VSH. Subcommittees have been formed to address specific barriers to the full implementation of a Treatment Mall at VSH. These include the environment of treatment, resources, staff training, and promotion of patient participation. The formation of a Patient Advisory Committee is planned to ensure patient involvement in the Treatment Mall development and implementation.

A pilot Treatment Mall has been operational since the first week in August in the Dale Building and Brooks Basement, with initial participation from Brooks Rehab patients. The goal at VSH is for 100% patient participation in the Treatment Mall as the programs are developed and expanded over the next several months.

VERMONT STATE HOSPITAL CENSUS

The Vermont State Hospital Census was 43 as of midnight Monday night. The average census for the past 45 days was 47.